

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KABUL 06154 01 OF 02 310629Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 SAA-01 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 MCE-00
ACDA-12 HA-05 /118 W
-----021553 310644Z /10

P R 301115Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9308
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC
CINCUER

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 6154

SECDEF: FOR ISA/DSAA

CINCPAC: FOR POLAD

CINCEUR: FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: EAID, MASS, PINT, PEPR, AF, IR, UR, PK, US
SUBJECT: TOUR D'HORIZON WITH AFGHAN DEFENSE MINISTER QADER

1. SUMMARY. DURING MY INITIAL COURTESY CALL ON JULY 26,
MAJOR GENERAL ABDUL QADER, AFGHANISTAN'S MINISTER OF
DEFENSE: (A) STRESSED AFGHANISTAN'S NEED FOR ECONOMIC
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 KABUL 06154 01 OF 02 310629Z

ASSISTANCE; (B) INSISTED THAT AFGHANISTAN IS NOT COM-
MUNIST; (C) ASSURED ME THAT USAID PERSONNEL WILL ENJOY
OPERATIONAL FREEDOM; (D) WARNED THAT PAKISTANI TROUBLE-
MAKING WILL RECEIVE AN APPROPRIATE AFGHAN RESPONSE;
(E) EXPRESSED WARM SUPPORT FOR THE CONTINUATION OF
OUR MILITARY TRAINING (IMET) PROGRAM; (F) IMPLIED
THAT HE SUBMITS TO CIVILIAN POLITICAL CONTROL; (G)

AND EXPLAINED THAT THE NEW TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS FOR FOREIGN MILITARY ATTACHES ARE NECESSARY FOR SECURITY REASONS. END OF SUMMARY.

2. ON JULY 26, I PAID MY INITIAL COURTESY CALL ON DEFENSE MINISTER ABDUL QADER (A KEY MILITARY LEADER IN THE AFGHAN REVOLUTION OF APRIL 27-28). QADER APPEARED A BIT TIRED AND, INITIALLY, SOMEWHAT TENSE, BUT HE RELAXED AS THE CONVERSATION PROGRESSED. MAJOR RAHMATULLAH OMID, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL AT THE MINISTRY, SERVED AS INTERPRETER. I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR AND THE AIR ATTACHE.

3. AFGHANISTAN'S NEED FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: QADER STRESSED THAT AFGHANISTAN IS A POOR, DEVELOPING COUNTRY WHICH NEEDS ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM WHICHEVER NATION IS WILLING TO HELP, PROVIDED THAT AFGHANISTAN'S INDEPENDENCE, NATIONAL INTERESTS, IDENTITY, AND INTEGRITY WERE NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR AMERICA'S LONG RECORD OF ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN (GIVING US CREDIT FOR "FIFTY YEARS"), CITING IN PARTICULAR U.S. CULTURAL PROGRAMS AND THE HELMAND VALLEY PROJECTS.

4. WHEN I REPEATED TO QADER THE THREE CONSTRAINTS ON U.S. ASSISTANCE UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM MENTIONED
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 KABUL 06154 01 OF 02 310629Z

TO REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL CHAIRMAN NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI ON JULY 13, (I.E., (A) U.S. LEGISLATION PROHIBITS OUR ASSISTING COMMUNIST COUNTRIES; (B) WE EXPECT OUR AID PERSONNEL TO ENJOY AS FREE MOVEMENT AND ACCESS AS THOSE OF OTHER AID DONORS HERE; AND (C) WE EXPECT AFGHANISTAN TO MAINTAIN PEACEFUL RELATIONS WITH IRAN AND PAKISTAN, HE MADE AN ARTICULATE PRESENTATION, RESPONDING TO EACH POINT.

5. NATURE OF THE AFGHAN REGIME: QADER STATED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE CONSTRAINTS IMPOSED UPON THE U.S. GOVERNMENT BY AMERICAN LAW AND THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT WANT US TO "COMMIT ANY VIOLATIONS." HE STATED THAT THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC AND AFGHANISTAN IS "NOT COMMUNIST, NOR, FOR THAT MATTER, IS IT EVEN SOCIALIST". HE EXPLAINED THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT COULD BEST BE DESCRIBED AS "DEMOCRATIC". ACCORDING TO QADER, THE DRA WAS ESTABLISHED TO ELIMINATE SERIOUS ECONOMIC INEQUITIES AND THE HISTORICAL DOMINATION OF THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE BY A MINORITY. (WE PRESUME THAT HE MEANT ETHNIC GROUPS, SUCH AS THE TAJIKS, HAZARAS, AND UZBEKS BEING DOMINATED BY THE PUSHTUNS,

QADER'S OWN, TOUGH, WARLIKE ETHNIC GROUP, WHO COMPRISE
SOME 35 TO 45 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION, AND WHO HAVE INDEDD
TRADITIONALLY DOMINATED AND EXPLOITED THE OTHER
GROUPS.) QADER STRESSED REPEATEDLY THROUGH THE
CONVERSATION THE STRONG DETERMINATION OF THE AFGHANS
TO MAINTAIN THEIR INDEPENDENCE. HE STATED THAT NO
KABUL REGIME, HOWEVER CLOSE ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH
THE USSR, WOULD BE ABLE TO IMPOSE AN UNPOPULAR
IDEOLOGY OR FORCE THE AFGHANS TO SELL OUT THEIR
NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE. (IN CONNECTION WITH HIS REFERENCE
TO KABUL'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE SOVIET UNION, QADER
RECALLED HOW THE AFGHANS HAD TO START BUYING WEAPONS
FROM THE USSR IN THE 1950S BECAUSE THE U.S. HAD
DECIDED NOT TO PROVIDE ARMS AT THAT TIME. HE PRO-
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 KABUL 06154 01 OF 02 310629Z

FESSED, HOWEVER, NOT TO KNOW THE REASON FOR THE U.S.
DECISION.)

6. FREEDOM OF OPERATIONS FOR USAID PERSONNEL: QADER
OBSERVED THAT OFFICIAL U.S. PERSONNEL IN AFGHANISTAN
HAVE ALWAYS ENJOYED GREAT LATITUDE IN TRAVELLING
THROUGH THE COUNTRY, HUNTING, FISHING, SIGHTSEEING,
AND VISITING HISTORICAL SITES. HE ALSO IMPLIED THAT
AMERICANS HAD BEEN PERMITTED MORE PERSONAL CONTACT
WITH AVERAGE AFGHANS THAN HAD BEEN THE CASE WITH SOVIET
ADVISORS. (QADER'S IMPLICATION WAS THAT AMERICAN
OFFICIALS WOULD CONTINUE TO ENJOY THIS FLEXIBILITY.)

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 KABUL 06154 02 OF 02 310424Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 SAA-01 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 MCE-00
ACDA-12 HA-05 /118 W

-----021315 310647Z /13

P R 301115Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9309

SECDEF WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC
CINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 6154

7. AFGHANISTAN'S RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS: QADER STATED THAT AFGHANISTAN ENJOYED EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH TWO OF ITS NEIGHBORS, THE USSR AND IRAN. AS FOR "THE EASTERN NEIGHBOR" (QADER AVOIDED THE USE OF THE NAME PAKISTAN), HE SAID THAT AFGHANISTAN DESIRED FRIENDLY RELATIONS AND A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF ALL DISPUTES. BUT, HE ADDED, SHOULD THAT "EASTERN ENIGHBOR" THREATEN AFGHANISTAN IN ANY WAY, THE AFGHANS WERE READY TO MAKE "AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE." (QADER REPEATED THIS WARNING AT TWO OTHER PARTS OF THE CONVERSATION, BUT DID NOT REVEAL WHAT SPECIFIC PAKISTANI ACTS MIGHT BE CURRENTLY DISTURBING HIS GOVERNMENT. HE DID NOT REFER TO CHINA AT ALL.)

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 KABUL 06154 02 OF 02 310424Z

8. FUTURE OF THE IMET PROGRAM: WHEN I EXPLAINED THAT THE USG WANTED TO MAINTAIN AN ACTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DRA ON MANY LEVELS, INCLUDING THE MILITARY TRAINING AREA, QADER RESPONDED POSITIVELY, RECALLING HOW HIGHLY HE HAD VALUED THE IMET PROGRAM WHILE COMMANDER OF THE AIR AND AIR DEFENSE FORCE DURING THE EARLY PART OF THE DAOUD ERA. HE REQUESTED THAT AS MANY IMET TRAINING SLOTS AS POSSIBLE BE PROVIDED IN THE FUTURE. I WELCOMED HIS RESPONSE AND SUGGESTED THAT OUR STAFFS WORK OUT THE DETAILS. (COMMENT: PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO DISCUSS IMET WITH HIS STAFF HAD FAILED, BUT, FOLLOWING THIS MEETING, HIS STAFF APPARENTLY WAS INSTRUCTED TO DISCUSS IMET WITH US. END OF COMMENT)

9. MILITARY'S ROLE IN DECISION-MAKING: HAVING BEEN TOLD BY OTHERS THAT NO MILITARY MEN ARE ON THE POLITBURO, I ASKED QADER WHETHER HE WAS A MEMBER, AND HOW HE PARTICIPATES IN THE TOP-LEVEL DECISION-MAKING IN THIS GOVERNMENT. QADER DUCKED THE QUESTION ABOUT THE POLITBURO AND SAID ONLY THAT, AS A SOLDIER, HIS DUTY WAS TO SERVE

THE STATE AND THE PEOPLE. HE HAD EVERY CONFIDENCE THAT THE CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP WAS MAKING DECISIONS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE COUNTRY. (IT WAS CLEAR BY HIS BRIEF RESPONSE THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO PURSUE MY LINE OF QUESTIONS AND IT MAY WELL BE THAT I WAS TOUCHING A SENSITIVE NERVE.)

10. RESTRICTIONS ON THE TRAVEL OF MILITARY ATTACHES: ASSURING QADER THAT WE INTENDED TO ABIDE BY THE NEW RESTRICTIONS (KABUL 5972), I ASKED WHETHER THE ORDER WAS BEING APPLIED IN A NONDISCRIMINATORY FASHION AND WONDERED WHY IT WAS ISSUED. QADER DID NOT RESPOND
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 KABUL 06154 02 OF 02 310424Z

TO THE FIRST QUESTION, BUT DID EXPLAIN THAT THE ORDER WAS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THE SECURITY OF FOREIGNERS MOVING THROUGH REGIONS WHERE THE SECURITY SITUATION IS NOT FULLY UNDER CONTROL, AS IT IS IN KABUL.

1. USE OF THE U.S. ATTACHE AIRCRAFT: I INFORMED QADER THAT I WILL SOON BE SENDING A DIPLOMATIC NOTE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY GIVING NOTICE THAT I PLAN TO VISIT THE HELMAND VALLEY AND THAT I INTEND TO TRAVEL VIA OUR ATTACHE AIRCRAFT. QADER MADE NO COMMENT.

12. BIOGRAPHIC NOTES ON QADER: QADER IS APPROXIMATELY 5 FEET, 9 INCHES TALL, AND SLIGHT OF BUILD. HE HAS A DENSE SHOCK OF BLACK HAIR AND HEAVY BLACK EYEBROWS. HIS FEATURES REMIND ONE VAGUELY OF LIBYA'S QADHAFI, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE COARSENEED SOMEWHAT BY HIS TOUGH PUSHTUN EXPRESSION. QADER GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF BEING STRONGLY NATIONALISTIC, TOUGH, EARNEST, AND WARY. I WAS IMPRESSED BY THE TOTAL ABSENCE OF ANY IDEOLOGICAL JARGON AND HIS COMMENT THAT NO REGIME COULD IMPOSE AN ALIEN IDEOLOGY UPON THE AFGHAN PEOPLE. I COULDN'T HELP BUT WONDER HOW AND WHETHER HE EXPRESSES SIMILAR VIEWS WITH HIS COLLEAGUES WHO ARE MORE IDEOLOGICALLY ORIENTED. HE SHOWED NO OFFENSE WHATSOEVER WHEN I MENTIONED THE PARAMETERS RELATING TO OUR ABILITY TO ASSIST AFGHANISTAN. WHEN I SPOKE BRIEFLY TO HIM IN RUSSIAN HE QUICKLY ADMITTED THAT IT WAS QUITE RUSTY AND IT SOUNDED THAT WAY, TOO. LIKE HIS MILITARY COLLEAGUE IN THE CABINET, MAJOR ASLAM WATANJAR, MINISTER OF INTERIOR -- BUT UNLIKE MANY OF THE CIVILIAN MINISTERS, QADER DOES NOT CARRY A SIDEARM OR HAVE AN AK-47 ON HIS CONFERENCE TABLE. HIS BODYGUARDS ARE NOT FAR AWAY, HOWEVER.

13. BIOGRAPHIC NOTES ON OMID: OMID, WHO COINCIDENTALLY RETURNED FROM A U.S. TRAINING COURSE ON THE VERY MORNING

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 KABUL 06154 02 OF 02 310424Z

OF THE REVOLUTION, OPENLY SPORTS HIS LEAVENWORTH COMMAND
AND GENERAL STAFF SCHOOL CLASS RING IN THE MINISTRY.
ONE OF THE FEW AFGHAN MILITARY OFFICERS THOROUGHLY
COMPETENT AT HANDLING AMERICAN IDIOM AND KNOWING
HOW AMERICANS THINK, OMID IS, INTER ALIA, AND
EXCELLENT INTERPRETER. A TURKOMAN FROM MAIMANA
WHO OCCUPIED THE SAME JOB DURING THE DAOUDIST ERA,
EVEN THOUGH HIS UNCLE, GENERAL RAZAQ, WAS A PRISONER
OF DAOUD'S, OMID IS THE TYPE OF USEFUL STAFF OFFICER
WHO CAN SURVIVE SUCCESSIVE CHANGES OF GOVERNMENT.

14. FOR ISLAMABAD: FYI: WE ARE PASSING THE GIST
OF THIS CONVERSATION TO THE PAKISTANI EMBASSY AT
KABUL.
DUBS

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, FOREIGN RELATIONS, MILITARY TRAINING, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, COMMUNISTS, TRAVEL CONTROLS, MILITARY ATTACHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KABUL06154
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780312-0953
Format: TEL
From: KABUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978075/aaaaadxr.tel
Line Count: 299
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b0dcf071-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1977096
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TOUR D'HORIZON WITH AFGHAN DEFENSE MINISTER QADER
TAGS: EAID, MASS, PINT, PEPR, AF, IR, UR, PK, US, (DUBS, ADOLPH), (QADER, ABDUL)
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b0dcf071-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014